

Sample Indiana's fabulously fun festivals.

By Sally Campbell Grout

Where can you fight a battle you know you'll win? See some of the finest craftsmanship out there? And sample food that may not be good for you but tastes oh so good? At dozens of Indiana festivals that fill the calendar and the state. Here are just a few to fill your summer with fun:

**Two incredible musicians, two memorable festivals.**

Lotus Dickey was a champion fiddler and songwriter from Paoli, Indiana. Among the most treasured of his tunes: Indiana, My Home Sweet Home. His talents are honored at the Lotus Dickey Hometown Music and Arts Reunion in Paoli (812-723-4318). This three-day event, June 11-13, features acoustical music, two stages, arts, food, live entertainment, and plenty of family fun.

Bill Monroe, with his clear tenor voice and skill at the mandolin, is a man whose name is synonymous with the bluegrass sound—not only in Indiana, but to bluegrass fans everywhere. The 38<sup>th</sup> Bill Monroe Bean Blossom Bluegrass Festival (800-414-4677), June 13-19, honors this legendary individual, and brings together more than 40 bands along with food and family activities during eight days of fun for “pickers, gridders, and listeners” at the oldest continuing bluegrass festival in the world

**Your head will be spinning (in a good way).**

If your only image of a windmill is that of a challenging hole on a miniature golf course, think again. For generations, people have harnessed the power of the wind through windmills; many of those windmills were once manufactured within a 100-mile radius of Kendallville. For that reason, the Indiana community was chosen as home of the Mid-America Windmill Museum. The 40-acre grounds display restored windmills while preserving and telling the story of wind power. At the Windmill Festival (260-347-8536) on the museum grounds June 25-27, enthusiasts can enjoy unusual windmills, antiques, crafts, and food, plus a chance to buy, sell and trade windmills.

**Empty walls?**

You'll be inspired to fill your home with original art after a day at Brownsburg's Countree Peddlers Arts in the Park (317-852-7885) July 17. More than 400 booths display arts and crafts from 12 states and include Victorian, Shaker, Contemporary, Folk, Amish and Primitive items.

**Still feeling artsy? And parksy?**

Head north to Griffith for A Park Full of Art (219-923-6267) July 17-18. A beautiful park setting showcases the work of 115 juried artists. Shop for original works in water color, oils, pottery, jewelry and more.

**True blue fun.**

Impressed with the power of your new whitening toothpaste? Then you're ready to sample the fare at the Marshall County Blueberry Festival (888-936-5020) September 3-6. Along with yummy blueberry treats, you'll enjoy more than 500 craft booths, more than 100 food booths, live entertainment, bicycle tours, sports tournaments, an antique car show, a parade, fireworks, magic shows and clowns. To work off that pie, you might want to participate in the 15k Blueberry Stomp.

**Small town, big fun.**

Why is it that the smaller the community the bigger the celebration? North Salem exudes small town charm 365 days a year, but during Old Fashioned Days (765-676-5474), September 4-6, this quaint community is livelier than ever. The festival features antiques, collectibles, crafts, antique machinery, pioneer demonstrations, live music, a 10k run, a 5k walk and Hendricks County's largest parade.

**A favorite movie comes to life.**

Dorothy may have been from Kansas, but she'd feel right at home in Chesterton September 17-19. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wizard of OZ Festival (219-926-5513) includes a chance to meet some original Munchkins, more than 280 food and craft booths, an OZ fantasy parade, look-alike contests, kids games, a family picnic, lunch with your favorite characters (even that Wicked Witch), a Judy OZ Auction/Swap Meet and other fun.